



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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National Seashore

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Point Reyes National Seashore News Release

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For Immediate Release
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Iceplant Removal Along the Cliffs of the Point Reyes Lighthouse

Intermittently over the next two weeks, a contract climbing crew (Pacific Slope Tree Cooperative) under contract to the National Park Service will be scaling the steep coastal cliffs near the Point Reyes Lighthouse to remove the non-native invasive iceplant. They will be descending and ascending on fixed ropes to gain access to this rugged site. Prior to this removal effort, Seashore biologists evaluated and mapped locations of iceplant along the Point Reyes Headlands from rappel lines and from boats. Preliminary surveys have shown that the iceplant is able to grow and persist on these slopes all the way down to the splash zone, making removal extremely difficult.

This effort is part of a strategic three-year coastal bluff restoration project aimed at improving habitat conditions for native plants and wildlife species. The bluffs support high species diversity, contrasting substrates and a multitude of microhabitats. Although comprehensive surveys have not been conducted along the entire coast of California, this area is considered to be one of the most diverse in the state. While the climbers will work on the steepest slopes, ground crews and volunteers will be working to eradicate iceplant on more even terrain.

Restoration of the habitat on the slopes and cliffs around the Lighthouse is essential to protect the extremely rare assemblage of plants and wildlife that exist here. The habitat for several rare plant species such as the Point Reyes checker lily and the Point Reyes rein orchid has been reduced due to the presence of the iceplant. In total, the area supports four federally listed plant Species of Concern, one state listed endangered plant, two federal plant Species of Concern, and four additional species listed by the California Native Plant Society. It also supports the greatest concentration of seabird nesting sites in California. Iceplant smothers native plants, covers nesting materials, and blocks access to breeding sites for red-tailed hawks and 11 seabird species.

Contact Pat McIntyre (415 464-5285) or Barbara Moritsch (415 464-5190) for further information.

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